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No. 357.

YES!

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

Oh sweet red rose, let you kiss me close,  
Did you hear what said last night?  
I saw your face, in its sweet, bright grace,  
Lean down to the lilies white.  
And I think you heard each whispered word,  
For the wind laughed out in glee,  
And a bird sung low to himate in dreams,  
Of the dream that had come to me.

Each drooping lid with its fringes hid  
Whispered her eyes from me,  
But I saw the smile of her cheek o'erspread  
The face that was fair to see.  
And her thoughts I read at the words I said  
In the red-rose flush on her cheek:  
And I knew full well what her heart would say  
Ere I heard my darling speak.

Then the wind sung sweet at the lilies' feet—  
Sung tenderly, soft and low;  
And the roses' musk, in the purple dusk,  
Drew me to her side, and I said,  
And "Oh, love of mine! I ask some sign  
Of the love that your cheeks confess!"  
Then her red lips stirred with one low, sweet  
word,  
And that word! that word was "Yes!"

## The Red Cross;

OR,  
The Mystery of Warren-Guilderland.

A ROMANCE OF THE ACCURSED COINS.

BY GRACE MORTIMER.

CHAPTER VII.

IN THE Harem.

AFTER two days and nights of hard riding, with short seasons of rest between, Timour-Emad and his band, with the American lady in their midst, approached the stronghold of their tribe.

This Bedouin encampment had been pitched within the tolerably well-preserved walls of an Arab village, which they had laid waste some time previously; and as the location was both secure and convenient, being behind walls, and in a "wady" or hollow place, where water was abundant, these restless marauders had not yet grown tired of and forsaken it for some fresh field.

The band approached, riding at full gallop as they neared the encampment, and uttering shrill, resonant shouts of victory; and, though it was a hord of vicious looking Bedouins rushing out of the breast of the wall which served as town gates, and was guarded by a picked patrol, and swarming round their victorious chief, kissing the feet, garments, and hand he carelessly extended them, or prostrating themselves under his snorting steel's hoofs, to be stolidly ridden over by the haughty conqueror—vied with each other in the ardor of their welcome. Meanwhile the rest of the band were being dragged from their horses, embraced and passed from hand to hand, with shouts of adulation and welcome, mingled with inquiries where the others were, where the spoil was, etc., etc.

It was a strange enough scene for the terrified eyes of the far-traveled lady; the slight eminence behind the wall was occupied by a host of "krumas" or tents, whose dingy brown was transformed into crimson by the red glare of the rising moon, while, conspicuously placed upon the apex of the gentle eminence, stood the *beit-el-shar*—the khalfa's tent, distinguishable by its position, its handsome white and scarlet stripes, and by the glittering spear thrust into the loose soil in front of it, with the standard of the tribe fluttering from its head.

As the cortège swept through the swarming throngs toward the point, a bay of women closely veiled from head to foot, and singing a wild sort of victory hymn, to which they kept time with their feet, approached, surrounded the sheik and his captive, lifted the latter bodily from her saddle, and bore her in their arms within the tent, into its inner compartment, the "harem."

Here these dark, soft-eyed, melancholy-looking beings, many of them evidently themselves the spoil of former conquests, and all the slavish ministrants to the savage voluptuousness of their rude lord, applied themselves, with eager zest, to the interesting task of preparing the new victim for the sacrifice; chattering among themselves in their soft, sibilant tongue, of which she understood not one word, while they deftly removed her dust-stained garments, laved her exhausted person in deliciously perfumed waters, thumbed their long fingers through her glittering gold-colored tresses, to free it from the sand of the desert and to charge it with a rich and fragrant unguent; until, under their delicate hands, softly-moving hands, their melancholy eastern eyes, and faint whispers, the weary captive fell asleep.

When she at last looked up, at a loss for a moment to account for her strange surroundings, a lurid, breathless, hushed dawn was penetrating its blood-red rays through the many interstices of her shelter, and the confused sounds of a savage host awaking to their daily life, came to her startled ear like the buzzing of a mighty myth.

She raised herself to her elbow and sent her terrified glance around the interior of the tent, then over her own person, with wonder and dismay unspeakable.

As to the former, it was adorned with all the barbaric splendor procurable through imperial robbery; upon the walls glistened a fine array of Arab weapons, tastefully set off by the rich folds of stolen scarfs and shawls of oriental looms; a brilliantly-draped carpet of morocco covered the bare ground; the divan upon which she reclined, was a pile of velvet tiger skins, with cushions of delicately-wrought needle-work on softest silk; and, separated only by the few feet of floor between them, she beheld the emir reclining upon another divan, the mate of her own, his eyes fastened in dreamy rapture upon his captive, while he smoked his "margeleh," keeping up a gentle bubbling noise in the "kuz-zazeh"—a large, handsomely-cut glass bottle, laid with gold, filled with perfumed water, over which the sky loured, thickly burdened with storm-clouds.

"Tis the howl of the jackals; they flee before

As to Cordelia's own person, she gazed in won-



"Emir, by this seal I demand your protection, and if you refuse it me—"

der and distress at its splendid orientalism: the fabrics so costly and beautiful in the extremes the more rich with dashes of gold and silver, but, while her head was delicately veiled and a sweeping veil of silver tissue, and her hair strong with glittering coins and immense gems, her bosom was exposed even more liberally than it would have been at a royal reception at the English court.

Perceiving her to have awaked from her long sleep of exhaustion, Timour-Emad, signing her silently to draw her veil close, clapped his hands loudly, and, instantly, two Arab servants entered, bearing a little polygonal stool, and a tray of lacquer work, in which were socketed two tiny porcelain cups, from which rose the fragrant steam of Turkish coffee. These objects they placed upon the ground between the divans, vanished again, and reappeared, the one with a golden basin, the other with a golden ewer; and, kneeling before the chief, poured water upon his hands, drying them afterward with a damask napkin. This ceremony was

formed for the captive immediately after the attendants not daring to glance at her. They then offered a cup to each, also a gilded bowl filled with a curious pasty mass, which Cordelia recognized as the favorite Arabian dish of rice, wheat, beans, and oil.

As she could not at once prevail upon herself to touch the proffered hospitalities of her captor, he said, in his careful English: "Damsel, eat, I pray thee; drink, when we shall be as kindred, and no strangers. The salt of brotherhood leaves not the heart of a Bedouin. Eat, and be at peace."

After a moment's reflection, she compelled herself to accept the significant courtesy, and having satisfied her hunger, which, in spite of her imminent position, the long ride, with its brief pauses for refreshment, had sharpened, she felt herself safer from the violence of the English court.

"Emir," she returned, icily, "beware how you insult me. I am thy captive, you know why—for my father's sake, not from love of you. In my land, a brave man would scorn to demand the duty of a woman who loved him not. Keep me in captivity forever, if you like it; but do not expect me ever to consent to be your slave."

She checked his fiery ardor with a look, and a proud wave of her hand.

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"Golden Moon forgets that she is the spoil of the conqueror, won him by his spear, and by his saber—he to kill or to save alive—to degrade or to honor. Shall the conqueror then kneel to his captive, suing for what is his by right of warfare? Shall not the captive kneel to her conqueror, praying him to lift her to the high estate of chiefest sultana of his tent? Yea, and as God liveth, many as fair have sued in vain!"

and again he approached her, and this time would not be frown'd away, but seized her in his brawny arms.

"Stop!" she cried, in a thrilling tone of command.

Taken by surprise, he released her.

Retreating to the opposite side of the tent, she suddenly possessed herself of a small Eastern dagger, which caught her eye as the interior view presented, and, recrossing back the pale silken sleeve of her Eastern dress, the whole of her white arm was visible up to that spot upon which Masudi had imprinted the as yet unknown symbol which was to save her in her darkest need, made as if to plunge the blade into her own bosom, while she exclaimed, vehemently:

"Emir, by this seal I demand your protection, and swear by my God that if you refuse it me, I shall escape your insulting love by death!"

Timour-Emad stood a moment as if stricken dumb, his eyes fastened upon the mark which was now revealed on the glistening satin of her arm—his lean, dark visage changing, gradually and awfully. A slight shudder then passed over him: he parted his thin lips in a malignant, bitter, mocking smile, his white teeth clicking ominously, and with the blackest blood in his savage heart boiling up under the utterly unlooked-for revelation, his words rolled forth,

raging and impetuous as the howl of the furious tiger.

"What?" he yelled, while the same long, tortured wail came again from the desert, as the jackals fled before the coming tempest, and the jingling of the advancing horsemen rung nearer as the strangers swept into the city of refuge—"what! hath my brother Masudi only played the traitor unto me, to send into my tent—to tempt his brother, and to spy out the weakness of the land—his wife? His wife, marked with the blue scarabaeus of betrothal—his favorite queen, the delight of his eyes, whom to touch, were the blackest perfidy of brother to brother? Now, as God and His Prophet live, I shall avenge myself upon this my treacherous brother. Yea, and upon thee also, thou dissembler" and with a howl of ungovernable fury, he tore a saber from its rest on the wall, and, throwing himself upon the horrified lady, hurled her to her knees, and flashed the glittering blade above her head in deadly menace.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ARAB RIVALS.

In that supreme moment, while the imperial purple eyes of the doomed lady met with cold contempt and haunting reproach the bloodshot glare of the infuriated savage, a sudden, loud, tumultuous shout came from the people without—the "Allah il Allah" of a salutation, or an attack.

At the first sound of it, the emir dashed aside his weapon and released his intended victim with a curse full of Moslem blasphemy, and, as if he felt ashamed of himself for his momentary impulse against the guest with whom he had so lately eaten the sacred salt of hospitality, strode instantly from her presence.

Cordelia kept her knees, a heavenly radiance upon her; she was returning God humble thanks for His deliverance on her behalf.

Next instant the reiterated shouts of the multitude took form in her arrested ears, and, to her mingled joy and anxiety, she recognized the Arabian pronunciation of the one word, "Masudi!"

Her strange friend had come to her aid.

She examined the mark on her arm. Sure enough, upon the ivory surface was distinctly traced, in hair-like lines, the form of the sacred beetle of the East, the scarabaeus, as if tattooed in brilliant blue.

Timour-Emad had called it the seal of marriage, or betrothal; she was by its testimony, the property of the man who was now in the camp of his duped ally, Timour-Emad.

What was to be the upshot of these complicated circumstances?

Suppose Masudi should play her false, as he had played the traitor to his brother emir? Suppose he should claim her, defying her to disprove the testimony of the sign upon her arm?

But no—she could not recall the expression of Masudi's eye as it looked into her own in that parting moment, and doubt his integrity. He was not—she could not recall the expression of his eyes as he looked into her own in that parting moment, and doubt his integrity.

He who had the smallest right to, though he could not prove it, and his untried passions naturally clashed against the intangible idea of being cheated out of the finest woman he had ever beheld by this, his long-abhorred, but newly-allied brother robber, a younger man than himself, with fewer followers, and more conquests to boast of.

Therefore, it was with rather a formidable darkening of the lean Abrab visage that he answered:

"My brother hath said; now, who are his sureties? How are Timour Emad and his people to assure themselves that thou art the true Masudi, and no impostor, and that the other was naught?"

"Darest thou to cast doubt in the teeth of the king-vulture of the plain?" flashed the young chief, laying his richly-bejeweled hand upon the hilt of his saber. "What! dost thou, in thine own *beit-el-shar*, meet this thy newly-allied brother—the mighty Masudi—with insulting doubts, when he cometh unto thee with his people behind him, to ratify the bond of our alliance? I shall, the day of my renegade from the sacred customs of our race, set my drymen in array against thy men—spear for spear, and a soldier for soldier, and to the victor be the name of chief of both tribes be given; and so let Allah judge between thee and me!" And, with a volley of furious Arab oaths, and the foam white upon his lips, the incensed Masudi broke from the tent, and anon was heard shouting to his men, ordering them to arms.

For a moment Timour-Emad hesitated, a passing thought of the welfare of his people occurring to him; but a glance at the lovely anxious face of his captive decided him. Should he permit such beauty to grace any other tent than his own, now that he had a chance to fight for the prize? What were the lives of his men worth in comparison with this great triumph?

He, too, strode from her presence, and in

The formidable sounds continued and increased in terror; they approached nearer and nearer, and culminated in two voices raised in bitter dispute, which entered the outer compartment of the sheik's marquee.

In the indignant accents of one of these voices, Cordelia easily recognized Timour-Emad's; but the astonished and provoked voice that answered was strange to her ears. Before she had done noting this fact, a dark hand swept aside the curtain, and two sheiks burst into her astonished presence.

Timour-Emad, gesticulating wildly, while he seemed to invoke the aid of all his power, and—a stranger, whose first glance at the unvalued beauty of the captive, struck him dumb.

Confused and shrinking before the broad gaze of the excited pair, Cordelia could yet command herself sufficiently to rise and face them with stately rebuke.

"Why this intrusion, chief?" she demanded, coldly. "Is this the courtesy you extend to her who has eaten of your salt?"

The stranger, whose burning eyes were fixed upon the blue scarabaeus in a species of fascination, hearing those delicate accents uttered in the most musical voice in the world, began to examine her from head to foot, with quickly kindled admiration and covetousness. As for Timour-Emad, he seemed to be slowly recovering from a great astonishment, and to be oppressed with the greatness of some new thought, approaching his captive, he said, in his careful English:

"What sayest thou, damsel sealed with Ma-sudi's betrothal sign—is this thy lord, Masudi?"

What did he mean? The man before her was certainly *not* the Masudi who had impressed that sign upon her arm!

As she hesitated, bewildered and fearing to speak, the stranger also drew near her, and she read, with sickening apprehension, the fervid admiration of his looks, and the gradual resolve which crept into his envious eye.

"Hold thy peace, maiden!" exclaimed he imperiously. "It becometh not the woman to speak in the presence of her lord. By the Law and the Prophets, Timour-Emad, brother of Ma-sudi—who met thee in the desert, and called himself by my name—hath dealt deceitfully with thee, who art his impostor, and not Masudi; and this woman, sealed with the beetle of betrothal, is mine!"

This astounding declaration blanched the cheeks of the captive, and called a dark scowl to the face of the conquering chief.

Evidently he did not believe his visitor's statement—evidently he was not sufficiently enamored of his beautiful captive to welcome with joy any loop-hole through which he might snatch her from another's possession.

"Damsel, is this true?" demanded he, obstinately addressing her, in spite of his visitor's haughty remonstrance. "Hast thou ever before beheld this man, who, wearing not the face of that Masudi who succored thee on the plain, yet claims thee as the queen of his *beit-el-shar*?"

Trembling, as she read the burning gaze with which the pseudo-Masudi regarded her, and infinitely preferring the tender mercies of the middle-aged, and rather more noble-looking Timour-Emad to those of this younger and more brutal chief, Cordelia cried, emphatically:

"I know nothing of this man, nor he of me. We are strangers."

Timour-Emad uttered an exultant cry.

"Lo, my brother!" said he with affected politeness, "the woman denies these; is it not that thou hast mistaken her for some other woman of thy tent, even more comely than she?"

"The woman hath fled from me," answered the stranger, calmly. "She lies unto my brother. Woman, hold thy peace, lest I deal with thee as thou deservest at my hands. My brother, thou hast been the sport of treachery and falsehood. He who called himself thy brother and ally—the great Emir Masudi—was surely that base slave who assisted the flight of this my newly-betrothed queen. But all is well. Allah hath led my steps hither just in time to claim my own ere thou hadst in thy ignorance possessed thyself of it. The woman is safe; the true Emir Masudi is here; his people are with thy people. All is well, God and his Prophet be praised!"

This serene and devout harangue failed to carry the chief auditor along with it. Timour-Emad's admiration for his fair captive augmented a moment, and then, as his chance for possession was well and truly at his side, he snatched his plausible brother was swindling him out of a captive he had not the smallest right to, though he could not prove it, and his untried passions naturally clashed against the intangible idea of being cheated out of the finest woman he had ever beheld by this, his long-abhorred, but newly-allied brother robber, a younger man than himself, with fewer followers, and more conquests to boast of.

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the wild clangor of preparation for the unbrotherly conflict.

This utterly unlooked-for complication of circumstances plunged the bewildered lady into a chaos of doubts and fears. Her instant impression, after a keen scrutiny of the stranger's features, was that he was the *bona fide* Masudi, and that her would-be deliverer had personated him for no other purpose than to effect the rescue of herself and her parents.

This was not the time to speculate as to his reasons—although the thought of his kindly intentions gave her a momentary thrill of generous gratitude, even in the midst of her consternation at their defeat, by the unexpected appearance of the real Masudi. What was going to happen next?

One of these two sheiks must inevitably prove the conqueror, and, whichever it was, she was his acknowledged spoil.

She addressed herself to prayer.

The noise of preparation went on, increased, grew deafening, then suddenly passed away into the distance. The contending forces had gone forth of the gates to set the battle in array on the free sweep of the desert.

Suddenly Cordelia, kneeling with her face hidden in her hands, uttered a sharp cry. In the dead, stifling atmosphere, heard a great roar, mingled with a roar, as of rushing waters, rising from the desert; and before she had time to reach the opening of the tent to look out, the women from the next compartment came slithering into hers, and simultaneously came a shrill-clap, and something that struck the tent like a furious wave, tore at its stout cords, snapping them like pack-thread, plucked the stakes from the ground, and lifting the whole canvas bodily, carried it away in a cloud of sand and burning vapor.

The simoom was upon them, the simoom with its searing breath laden with the impalpable sand of the wastes it had roared over, impaling on its terrible wings a myriad stinging, gashing, blinding balls—the wild artichoke of the desert, which the summer heat had dried up until they were mere vegetable puffs, light as down, yet so covered with long prickly spines that they wounded whom they struck like hedgehogs, and rode the tempest, carrying terror and destruction with them. For a time Cordelia lay senseless, stricken down by the skirt of the canvas as it vanished. What were her sensations when, raising herself at last, she discovered the forms of her female companions lying around her in every attitude of abject misery? Their faces, their faces buried in the sand, and not a fold of their sand-laden garments moving. Cordelia had recovered during a lull in the hurricane, when the sky completely obscured by the sulphurous clouds, the whole atmosphere choking with dust, and a sinister yellowish glare irradiating the scene from horizon to horizon, nothing moved and nothing could be heard save the far-off walling of the panic-stricken jackals as they scoured the unsheltered plain like evil spirits.

In every direction lay the wrecks of tents with their late occupants prone on their faces amid the ruins; the very camels and horses she saw crouching with their noses buried in the sand, as if they lived there, the scene from the awful spectacle of the passing storm.

As for the late combatants, Cordelia could barely make out a confused black mass lying huddled together some half-mile beyond the wall, friend and foe apparently forgetful of their enmity, and the pallid sheet of dust settling down upon them alike, as one common shroud.

And while she gazed, with scorching eye-balls, her brain reeling and a deathly sickness stealing over her, in all that wide, moveless plain, on which the great tornado had obliterated all signs of life, she saw a tiny speck growing swift through motionless hosts, and unbroken sand-drift, and overthrown wall, and scattered tents, and panic-smitten people, and cowering animals, and the hot, breathless, prickly-laden, miasmic, brimstone-smelling atmosphere which broadened over all, gliding nearer and nearer, with mantle dragged across his face, and glittering cangiar half revealed with which to manacle any that might bar the way.

And this one man, the only soul besides herself who dared to look into the face of the storm, came to Cordelia at last, and suddenly seizing her hand, swept aside his veiling mantle, and she saw that it was the Masudi who had imprinted the sign upon her arm.

#### CHAPTER IX. THE SAND-STORM WAIF.

"I HAVE come to succor thee," said the disguised German, still preserving his character of Arab in pursuance of his own private plans; and again, as his honest eyes looked into the lady's, she experienced the sudden thrill of a nameless belief in him, and confidence in his intentions, as well as in his power to save her.

"Thank God! I aspirated she, tears of gratitude in her lovely eyes; "but, hush! the women, if they hear, may prevent me from going with you."

As she uttered this warning, the Arab caught up from the earth at his feet a loose cloak, the "abalyeh" of the Bedouin, an ample garment of black sackcloth of camel's hair, richly interwoven with gold thread, the emir's own garment, in fact; this he wrapped about the slender figure of the lady, so as to conceal her person and sex; then he took from his own head the "tarish" or fez cap, and placing it upon hers, word round the abalyeh of gold tissue, letting a thick fold of it entwine her hair as if against the sand-laden atmosphere. Henceforth this instantaneously transformed the brilliantly attired eastern lady into a very passable likeness of an Arab stripling, he placed upon his own head the first cap he saw upon the ground, providing himself from the same source with the enveloping turban, with which he also concealed his face, so that none who chanced to see him could distinguish a single feature.

"Come," whispered he, passing his arm around the form of the lady, English fashion, to her momentary surprise, and helping her deftly through the sand-laden atmosphere. Henceforth she instantly transformed the brilliantly attired eastern lady into a very passable likeness of an Arab stripling, he placed upon his own head the first cap he saw upon the ground, providing himself from the same source with the enveloping turban, with which he also concealed his face, so that none who chanced to see him could distinguish a single feature.

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thanking Heaven at every step that placed her further from the clutches of her rival lovers, the savage emirs.

They had not gone on twenty minutes when a quick warning cry was raised by the band—and looking behind, the terrified lady saw that they were pursued by the legions of both tribes, friend and foe mingled in the hot chase.

The lady paled; she gazed wistfully at her unknown deliverer. What would his course be in the face of this overwhelming host? What could he do with his handful before all these?

As if he read her thoughts in that long look, he smiled at her, and his smile was so sudden, so frank and brilliant, that she felt incomprehensibly drawn toward him, and intuitively betrayed the feeling, by an answering smile of simple truth.

"And besides?" said the apparent Arab, waving his dark hand toward the two horizons, from each of which a mysterious phalanx of sand-pillars were swiftly advancing, magnified to colossal dimensions by the weird mirage.

And the word had scarce left his mouth, when the storm, whose aid he had seemed to promise her, burst upon them. It was the second paroxysm of the simoom.

With a crashing and tearing sound like the rippling of water, the sand-gust burst from the imprisoning clouds, struck a little bank like a wave of the lashed-up sea, and sent them all staggering to the ground, to lie there motionless, with their faces buried in the dust, while the suffocating sand-storm swept over them, laden with those tearing, stabbing, spiked stubble-balls before described; and the awful sand-pillars circled round them, and passed and repassed them like a deadly dance, as if looking for them; while they held their breath, and clung to the scorching ground, and tried through half-closed eyelids and vailing scars to see the approach of the fatal pillars, any one of which might glide into her with a pang of anguish.

"I have no family," she said; "ask me no questions; I have been carried from them like a utter heart-broken."

Cordelia's horse had fallen to his knees, shaking her off the saddle as he did so, her friend had caught her in his arms, wrapped her val more securely over her mouth and nostrils, and crushed her into the shadow of her steed, saying:

"Press close to the animal, and breathe not the air as it passes; it is laden with death."

And she had carefully obeyed him, only groping anxiously for his hand to hold while the storm raged.

The sand whirled and shrieked; it was hot as a blast from an oven, and while the sharp sand and spiked artichoke-balls, with which it was burrowed, cut and scorched them wherever it could sift through their garments, it tore these sheltering garments from them, rent them piecemeal, and stripped them defenseless; the last flicker of daylight was obscured by the wild wrack of the piled-up clouds, and the thickness of the atmosphere, and the sun peered through the yellow, smoky haze as red as blood; all sounds were drowned by the deafening roar and screaming hiss of the passing tornado; Cordelia felt the heat again, which she lay trembling and quivering with fear, and the hand that clasped her tightened its pressure, but her soul sank at the horror of this storm, so utterly unparalleled.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 355.)

When she was calm they told her the rest. The leader of the band was one Marcus Gaylure, a London solicitor, who had traveled into these regions in his search for a Baron Berthold, of Warren-Guiderland, and coming upon her, apparently an Arabian lady smothered in the late sand-storm, with a dead Arab beside her, they had fast constrained to pick her up, as her heart still beat, but feeling no life in her companion, they had left him undisturbed, and hurried on with her to safe distance from the Bedouin encampment which was at hand.

"Gentlemen," said Cordelia, urgently, "I can leave him to the birds and beasts of prey. Return, I beg of you, and let me bury my deliverer."

"They at first refused; then, as she still persisted, tried to reason with her. But when they saw that she would not accompany them another step unless they obeyed her wishes, they returned toward the spot where the sand-storm had ended.

But though they searched that whole day, they never found the spot.

"It is useless," said Gaylure, who was strangely attentive to the lady's whims, considering that as yet she had not sought to reveal her name or circumstances: "the wind has risen, and has doubtless carried your rescuer westward."

"The face of the desert changes every hour; it is like the sea swept by waves which obliterate every print."

And she was forced to yield, and to ride away with them, but an infinite

to Mrs. Matthews' arm; "now I care not how soon it is ended. I am more eager for it to end than I was for it to continue."

"It will end soon enough too soon," said Mr. Kellogg, who had come up to them; and, taking a hand of each, he said, in a low tone: "The ship is on fire!"

Margaret could hardly have been whiter than she was before; she trembled more and, clinging to the hand he had given her, asked:

"You will let me die with you, will you not?"

Both looked into the glassy, foaming ocean, and shuddered; they were young, and life was sweet; if only they could have it as they wished it; but Mrs. Matthews, moaning, and about to rush about frantically, to spread a dangerous alarm, had to be held in check by Mr. Kellogg, who said:

"Your husband will be here in a moment, madam. There is no immediate danger. The fire is in the hold, and the captain does not entirely despair of keeping it under until we can make land. Should this calm weather continue, there will be less danger; and, meantime, should the worst be unavoidable, we may find it with a vessel, we are so near the end of our voyage. There are many avenues of hope open, and the officers have every means of time to man and provision the boats, which are in good order, and enough of them for the rescue of all. The wintry weather is against us, if obliged to take to open boats; but even then we can hardly fail of being soon picked up, lying off the coast of Ireland as we do. It will at least be several hours before the fire can master the ship."

The manager of the theatrical troupe now came up, and joined the group. Other gentlemen began to whisper the terrible story to white-faced lady-passengers. There was no great outcry, after a few first screams of terror or surprise. All the ladies went quickly to their state-rooms, and provided themselves with the warmest clothing they had, putting on two pairs of stockings, and bringing back with them hoods and shawls, such stores of money and jewelry as they had been secured within their garments. Fortunately, there were no steerage passengers; and the captain, appearing soon in the cabin, assured his breathless listeners that the boats would be ample for their accommodation—that they were being provided with food and water, and that when the moment came that the vessel must be abandoned, if come it did, all should have due notice to thoroughly prepare themselves for the hardships before them. At the earliest time, dinner would be served as usual, and he advised them to eat, as it might be some time before they again enjoyed a warm and well-cooked dinner. He smiled as he said this last, but he could not prevent a certain solemnity of tone, which impressed upon them, in spite of his assumed cheerfulness, that a voyage in open boats in the month of January was not a desirable thing.

Old tales of shipwrecks, of starving crews in open oceans, long days and nights of hope which changed to despair, and courage which melted into insanity and death, came, spectral and gaunt, before their memories. They looked in each other's faces, shuddered, and sighed. But when they heard the steady clanging of pumps, and thought of the hell of fire that smoldered under them, ever spreading, creeping, deepening, seeking, with tongues of flame, for every smallest stream of air; when they thought of this, conquering the steely fight of the faithful crew and gaining on them, hour by hour, the boats took a friendly and home-like guise.

Mr. Kellogg had conducted Margaret to her state-room, and stood outside while she gathered together such effects as she wished to take with her, in case they took to the boats. But the stranger was there, also, in the narrow, dim passage, and as the young lady came out, said:

"Take good care of your marriage-certificate, Mrs. Martinique."

She did not reply—handing her shawl to Mr. Kellogg.

Then as if the catastrophe impeding over them drove out all malice and revenge, leaving only his great love to speak for itself, he grasped her hand, crying out.

"Margaret, don't leave me! I will save you. You shall be safe with me. I am the one to care for you in an hour like this."

But she drew her hand away, placing it on the actor's arm.

"Come, I say. You shall be safe with me, whatever happens."

"Mr. Martinique, I will remain on this vessel when every other soul has deserted her, rather than go with you. I don't wish to be rescued, if it must be by you. Don't persecute me at this time. If you do as I say, I shall remain on the ship."

"But, Margaret, dearest, darling wife, if we are separated now it may be forever. One may perish, the other live. Or we may be taken up by ships sailing to ports on opposite sides of the world."

"Pray heaven we may."

"I did not mean that," quickly correcting himself, seeing the mistake he had made. "Of course we shall both take the same boat; that I am resolved on. But why not, Margaret, in this awful hour, forgive the deception I was guilty of, in view of the love which prompted it? Why longer fly from me, whose wife you are, who am kept miserable by your conduct? I will make you happy. All that you ask shall be yours. We will live where you say, do what you wish. Come, put an end to this farce; acknowledge yourself my wife, and all that man can do to save you shall be done; and if you must perish, I shall share your fate. You will at least die in your husband's arms—not in those of an adventurer, who is amusing himself with your ignorance of the world," and with a contemptuous glance at the actor he again seized her hand, attempting to draw her along to his side, to the other cabin, where dinner was being placed upon the table.

"Go!" commanded Margaret; and Kellogg, seeing that delay was dangerous, climbed down, and stood, balancing himself ready to seize her, as she was about to lift him in his arms, with the rope about her waist, she held back, bidding him go first into the boat.

"Let me see you safely in," he said.

"No, no, I will not leave you behind. Something may happen. Go first, and receive me as I am handed down."

"For God's sake, no time!" cried the captain, as a blast of wind shook and tossed the frail boat, and the flames, as if in revenge for being so long suppressed, leaped and roared, and a hot breath from them nearly suffocated those still on the ship.

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**A Rival of "Overland Kit."** — We shall soon put a new *Star* to the front in the field of Life, Character and Adventure in the Territories—that wild West where "civilization" assumes strange and startling phases. The new romance is centered, for its *locate*, in and around Dead Wood City, in the heart of the Black Hills country, where now are gathered some of the wildest of spirits and most adventurous of men.

In its deeply-exciting story and vivid portrayal of life in that region, readers have A NEW SENSATION that will arouse attention and create great curiosity as to the identity of authorship.

**Pleasant Features.** — In this issue we give the first of a series of "Stories of Chivalry," by T. C. Harbaugh, that, as brief historic romances, will be a pleasant feature of the season. Nothing better advises the reader of the real life and persons of other days than this kind of reading, which is equally entertaining and informing.

In "Tales of the Indies," which we have already presented several, the far East has such a life-like presentation as makes one see it as it is—almost as good as reading a book of travels. Like the above-announced series, the sketches are enteraining and instructive.

A very pleasant group of stories—the Romance of a Pullman Car—are in hand for early use. A Pullman Palace Car is detained, on the overland trip, by an accident, in a wild place, and, to while away the time, its passengers each tell a story that is, in truth, well worth the telling. Our readers will very much enjoy them.

## Sunshine Papers.

### Omnium-gatherum.

"A MISCELLANEOUS collection of things or persons; a confused mixture; a medley." Thus encouragingly Webster defines the rule-defying word, a word like the Englishman's favorite beverage "al'f and al'f." Think of using grave Latin, and then mocking that ancient and hallowed language by suffixing an irreverent Anglo-Saxon *um* to Anglo-Saxon *gather*, and jumbling the two together! I'm not sure that I could have found it in my heart to have spoken in such indecorous and macaronic phraseology had I consulted Webster before making the remark of a certain old book-case, that it was a regular omnium-gatherum.

"Omnium-gatherum?" repeated some one, with innocent, inquiring gaze. But some people have a faculty for looking just sweetly ignorant and innocent, when they are mentally criticizing you at the rate of a page of dictionary a minute.

I flew to the "Unabridged." There it was. "Yes, a regular omnium-gatherum," said I. "Why not?"

"Why, I'm sure I don't know why not," said some one, mildly.

I wanted to say something; but I kept calm, and returned with a sigh to the book-case. We had decided it should be sent to the auction-room. It had long been a disgrace to the house. And now that we had a handsome new one, quite well fitted with furniture, we were resolved the old one should be dismantled of its contents, and sent adrift. It might bring five dollars; that would purchase two new books we were wanting. Once we had been offered ten for it; but that was some years ago, and we had always regarded our refusal to sell it at that time as an awful mistake in the way of financial policy. Certainly, we should not get that amount for it now.

"What a disreputable-looking piece of furniture it is," thought I, as I sat me down before it. It loomed from the floor nearly to the ceiling; and no doubt the time had been when it was the pride of many a collector's eyes. Now the mind of the owner was dimpled off in many places, and burned and blistered in others. Many dry bits of beading and ornaments were lost; most of the locks had long defied the utmost skill and patience to secure them, and all about were scratches and bruises where extraneous matter—ofttimes, doubtless, little feet—had come in rough contact with it. The upper doors, of glass, swung partly open—they never would keep shut—and through them stared the titles of the books; for we had long since ceased to spend money for silk to tack within them; though, even within our memory, many sets of curtains, rich hung-up material, had hung in great folds behind the glass. But who could be expected to expend much care upon an article that had so long been old-fashioned, and consigned to the family room as an omnium-gatherum of family conveniences?

First were the books—four shelves full—to be disposed of. About ten favorite novels, some of Washington Irving's works, a few standard poetical works, and some volumes of essays and history, were consigned to the new book-case. Still the diminution had not been great, and enough books were discovered, on the shelves back of the outer rooms, to supply all vacant places. There were catalogues, reports, bound manuscripts, school books, and a perfect medley of miscellaneous literature. Could not these be sold for old paper? No. Every book that we selected, to lay aside, was finally retained for some good and sufficient reason. A most troubled feeling commenced to lay hold upon us. It was evident we could not part with the books; what should we do with them? The bindings were mostly worn, torn, and faded, and would look out of place among the new books in the new book-case. To be sure they might be rebound; but that would not obviate the further difficulty of the other case being sufficiently large to hold a dozen or two more volumes.

With a sigh we concluded that the central portion of the troublesome piece of furniture. There were three drawers, twelve pigeon-holes, and some racks, all full of receipts, mortgages, insurance policies, bills, statements, cards, addresses, bank vouchers, business letters, private letters, catalogues, and a hetero-eineous mass of papers and treasures, that was appalling! But few of them could be destroyed, and where should we keep the rest?

With gloomy faces we closed the secretary, and passed on to the desk, that was free of access to all the family. In one side box, was enough cord and twine to keep a grocery supplied for some days; in the opposite one were keys, screws, nails, a screw-driver, gimlet, and

various little articles of general use. There were inksstands of various patterns, and bottles of ink, varnish, makers. The varnish, Emma leaves, boxes of pens, sets of sticks of toothpicks, of pencils, of fancy paper and envelopes, and games. There were Mollie's tatting, some fancy neckties waiting to be cleaned, some odd rolls of ribbon and lace. There were papers and envelopes of all size and kinds, post-office guides, blank-books, magazines, clippings for scrap-books, unanswered letters, paper-cutters, ink-erasers, blotting-pads, pen-wipers, etc., etc., ad infinitum. We didn't even try to touch this compartment, but passed hurriedly to the inclosed shelves beneath.

There were the children's scrap-books, the baby's box of playthings, Emma's boxes of dried autumn leaves, boxes of small portfolios, packs of cards and dominoes, boxes of button-making silks, materials for wax flowers, work-baskets, some small locked desks of long-cherished mementos—not to mention several dozen other articles—and actual despair again took possession of our souls!

"Don't you think we'd better keep the old book-case?" suggested some one, meekly.

"Keep it! of course we will have to keep it!" said I, indignantly: "such a horrid, hateful, old-fashioned thing as it is, too! I wonder if any other family in the country is afflicted by such *beau voisin* as this old piece of furniture? I wouldn't mind my disappointment so much if it were not for the fact which a body would ever have any sympathy!"

"My dear!" said some one, thoughtfully, after I had thus complainingly delivered myself, "couldn't we put it in next week's Sunshine? I wouldn't wonder if a great many families, like ours, suffer under the possession of an omnium-gatherum."

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

### ENJOYMENTS.

WHAT A variety of ways there are in which people enjoy themselves! Some people find their enjoyment in the perusal of a good book or interesting paper, and while their attention is thus absorbed they are entirely oblivious as to what the outside world is about. The printed pages have an intensely great charm for them. To call knowledge is their chief delight. They never weary in following a narrative where the men and women are the heroes—for men and women have enacted, and are still enacting, brave and gallant deeds. Well, this reading is good for them; they are made better by it; they will live for some higher and nobler purpose for it. Books open up new scenes; they are a world into which the practical side of life: they make us forget the many cares and troubles which beset us, and time is passed in reading which might be less profitably employed.

There are some who do not take to books and write periodicals a bore. Give them hunting, fishing, swimming, riding, boating, or sports of any kind and they are happy. Anything to be out in the open air and exercising themselves. Winter never seems dull to them. How can it be, when they have sleighing, skating, and skating to pass away the time? This exercise is healthy, if it is not a bore.

The exercise is harmless and serves to build up the body and invigorate the system.

Merry hearts, ruddy faces, and strong constitutions are the results of this out-door enjoyment.

Don't strive to discourage persons from finding pleasure in the open air, at seasonable times and in appropriate places. Too much staying in the house causes too many visits to the physician and apothecary.

Some persons find their greatest enjoyment in attending to their church duties and in going about doing good. They do not leave their Christianity in their pew, when they leave church, only to be thought of when they visit the edifice again. They talk it with them wherever they go, and fit it into every aspect they meet.

It makes them their own and their neighbors' friends.

They are good for the health, and their

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Don't strive to discourage persons from finding pleasure in the open air, at seasonable times and in appropriate places. Too much staying in the house causes too many visits to the physician and apothecary.

Everyone finds enjoyment in doing good for others.

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Everyone finds enjoyment in doing

"GOD'S ACRE."

BY MRS. ADDIE D. ROLLSTON.

Here sleep within this hallowed ground  
The old, the young, the grave, the gay,  
Deaf to the wooing song of spring,  
Blind to the golden light of day.  
Forsaken through the drooping boughs  
Of gloomy cypress trees, the boughs  
Of sweeping winds, that ever tell  
Their whispers in an undertone.  
The very skies seem full of woe,  
E'en though they shine with radiance fair,  
And flowers that blossom brightly here  
A sad, sweet beauty ever wear!

There sleep beside a tiny grave,  
Sweet with the flowers of blushing spring,  
With violet and their simple blooms,  
And summer birds their music sing.  
A little hand seems stretching out  
Across the mystic, dim Unknown,  
And kisses warm from baby-lips  
Seem with a thrill to meet my own!  
O! violet eyes, forever sealed!  
O! snowy hands, forever stilled!  
There sleep an empty void where once  
A little presence sweetly filled!

Here, glistening whitely in the sun,  
A mighty column stands, and  
Where slumbers one whose life was pure,  
Whose generous deeds were once renowned.  
But long ago the voice was hushed,  
The tired heart was laid to rest;  
The weary hands freed from the toil,  
Weeble-wobble in the useless breast.  
And yet through long and bitter years,  
Despite the grave that lay between,  
One mourned with hopeless grief his loss,  
And kept his memory fresh and green!

And here, within this oak-tree's shade,  
Forgot, neglected and alone,  
I find a sunken, nameless grave,  
Unmarked by even the simplest stone.  
A man's voice, weak with hopeful eyes  
The coming of a much-loved form  
That in eternal stillness lies.

Watched till the heart grew sick with fear,  
For words came not from I ps grown dumb,  
And ne'er again through twilight a gloom  
The eager spirit of feet will come!

And oh! the fond hopes buried here!  
The radiant dreams that daily died,  
Washed out with weep the bitter tears  
Above the shrouded, silent dead!

And some are left to walk life's way,  
Who long with fierce and bitter pain  
To rest with those that never will walk  
In earthly path again.

Yon widow looks on the snowfall's fall,  
Looks down on every clime and land,  
And guardeth with a father's love  
The smallest creature of His hand!

And so when starry evening comes  
The calm, still twilight of the years  
That endeth all life's pain and toil,  
And covers loss and sorrow's tears;  
It will be sweet to slumber here,  
And folded in the soft perfume rare,  
The sunlight falls with splendor fair.  
Sweet then to lay each burden down,  
The brooding care that vexed us so,  
And in eternal slumbers sweet  
No earthly losses o'er to know!

Cecile's Two New Years'.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

OUTSIDE the snow was falling thickly, noiselessly; the branches of the trees were wrapped an inch or more deep in their cloaks of feathery whiteness, and the tall evergreens that seemed standing on guard on either side the entrance to the house, looked wondrously beautiful in their white and green array.

Far and near reigned the unbroken silence that comes with a veritable, old-fashioned snow-storm. No wind, no biting cold, and, as yet, no sound of sleigh-bells, that even in the village of Markham would ring merrily and constantly, when the storm should cease, and the roads, piled two feet high, already, should "be broken."

Within the large double house on the main street—the house guarded so royally by the arrowy-straight, majestic pines, the streaming lights from the windows that gleamed brightly even through the thickly-falling snow, gave token that there was pleasant comfort, at least, within. And there was—there could not fail of being happy hearts and sunshine faces in the Hazleton household, for many reasons; chiefest of which was—on the morrow, on the glad New Year, Cecile was to be married. Cecile, the youngest daughter, that had captivated more hearts than had her brother—the quiet, grave, gentle-minded man who was sitting opposite the grate, talking to Mr. Hazleton.

He was of all twenty years older than Cecile, John Duval was; and other people besides himself wondered how he ever had come to be so infatuated with the sassy, golden-haired Cecile, not yet nineteen.

Other people wondered with surprise—he himself with thrills of glad, worshipful joy, whenever he looked at the girl who, on the morrow, was to crown his life with perfection.

He had known her only a year, and that year had taught him the strength and depth of an affection he had never accredited himself with. A year of strange surprise on his part, at the first, when he found how the girl could sway him at her merest caprice. Then weeks and weeks of alternate hope and fear, lest he should not find favor in her sight—then such wild joy, such ecstasy of delight, when her own sweet, panting lips had confessed she loved him.

He was perfectly content after that. He would not have changed places with a living man on earth; he waited so contentedly and expectantly for the time when he might take her in his arms, forever and ever his very own.

And now—this noisy, silent night—this New Year's eve was at hand; and the morrow, whether shrouded in snow clouds, or bathed in joyous sunshine, was his and Cecile's wedding day.

Every thing was in readiness; the bride's trunks were packed and standing in the hall. The dainty gray traveling suitting in the wardrobe, and the gloves and kid boots were only awaiting the moment when Cecile should don them. In New York, miles away from the quiet little New Jersey village, the pleasant home was in readiness for them; and at the very moment that John Duval sat by the glowing fire in Cecile's home, the fire in his own house was blazing and burning merrily in anticipation of his glad coming on the morrow.

He might have been thinking of that, or something equally pleasant, for the tender happiness on his face deepened, and a mute, adoring light leaped into his grave, earnest eyes, as the outer door closed and the parlor door opened, admitting Cecile—a tiny, graceful girl, with yellow hair, starred with big snow-flakes, and cheeks of rare peachy freshness.

Duval looked at her, wonderingly; then anxiously.

"You haven't been out in this storm, Cecile? What if you should catch cold?" She laughed as she threw back the little scarf that had been thrown over her head.

"Indeed, I have been out it's just glorious! Why, I have been gone an hour. Didn't you miss me?"

How pretty, how piquant she was. It was little wonder Duval's heart was full of proud joy. Even Mr. Hazleton imbibed the charm of her presence.

"Nobody once thought of you, madcap. It isn't of the least consequence, if you haven't caught cold, and enjoyed the storm."

Cecile turned a flushed, eager face toward him; and John Duval wondered if the exhilaration of the air had lent such brilliant excitement to her eyes.

"Enjoyed myself! it is the happiest night of all my life!"

He just glanced at her bewitching face, and just caught a glimpse of the effect of her own words; then, with a graceful little gesture of her sunny head, averted her face.

"You two prosy gentlemen are welcome to your fire and grave discussion of stocks. I shan't

disturb you, I think—for awhile. Where's Nell, papa? In the dining-room. John—take care of papa till I come back!"

She threw him a kiss—her face all alight with such wondrously-beautiful excitement, and went out into the hall, her skirts rustling as they trailed over the carpeting, her feet patterning swiftly as she ascended the stairs.

Half an hour afterward, Mrs. Hazleton came swiftly into the room, holding a slip of paper in her hand; her face white as the snow outside, a great, speechless agony in her eyes.

Mr. Hazleton sprang to his feet in alarm. John Duval, with a sharp anguish of fear on his face, waited, as if for the confirmation of some terribly-vague, suddenly-born suspicion.

The mother dropped the notelet from her trembling fingers into her husband's outstretched hand.

"Read it; can it be true?—convince me it is not true."

Mr. Hazleton read the four lines aloud, in a voice that trembled with fear and astonishment greater than stern rellessness.

"Mamma, dear mamma," it said, in Cecile's unmistakable handwriting—"don't let pap and dear old John be angry with me; I know you will not be when you know I have gone with Fred—we were married at the parsonage an hour ago. I love him, and he loves me better than all the world."

And that was one New Year's eve.

Year after year had added its softening memories to the past, until seven New Year's days had come and gone, and 1875, with its clear skies and crisp frosty air had come right royally in, laden with its cheer and welcome to thousands of happy, hopeful hearts.

But, for all the flowing wine, the garlanding evergreens, the branching holly, the mirth and joyousness, the glad wishes and ardent benisons, there were aching hearts on the bright sunshiny Friday, January 1st, 1875; and no heart ached more dull, or less constantly, than John Duval's—proud, stern, reculent man that he was, and doubly so since the night seven years ago, when Cecile Hazleton had dashed the cup, already brimming, to his lips. That had been a frightful blow to him—one that, at the first, completely prostrated him, one that laid him on his back, in a low fever of raging delirium for weeks. Then, when he recovered, a mere shadow of his former self, a quiet, patient, enduring, yet hopeless man, he knew Cecile had hit harder than she meant to.

At first, he could not forgive her. Hard thoughts at her daring duplicity, that made him the dupe, at her cruel deception, at her heartless indifference, raged against her. Then, as the years went on, and he never saw her, or heard

figure, so slight, so graceful, so full of nervous enthusiasm. Then he smiled sadly.

"I think not your Cecile, boy. She is twenty-two or three years old, and you—"

"I am just twenty-two—I know I look younger."

"Yes, you do—and, you have a Cecile, too?"

A moment's silence, then he began to speak in a low, eager tone, that grew furious as he went on.

"You have a Cecile—you—a Cecile, you, a beardless boy! You dare look forward to happiness with a woman who bears the name *she*—but say, boy, what Cecile do you love? Tell me her name!" he demanded, hotly.

A quick averting of the face, a perceptible shivering of the figure, and then a low, half-reckless whisper, as if the man's violence alone compelled it.

"Cecile—Cecile Gasten."

Pete was almost whispered, but Duval heard it, and staggered back to his chair.

"My God!—Cecile Gasten—and you know her love her—"

The lad's voice interrupted him.

"Did I say I loved her? Do you love her? Tell me you do, and—"

Duval laughed. Was this boy taunting him, daring him?

"Do I love her—the woman who deserted me on my marriage eve, seven years ago to-night? Do I love her—fair, false, fickle? Do I love her, the only woman I ever kissed in my life, who has wrecked my life, and made me a ghost among the shadows of the past, out of which I can never escape?—Yes, I love her."

He looked at the boy almost sneeringly, in his own great grand superiority, and then suddenly grew mute, paralyzed with astonishment, to see him rush across the space between them and fall sobbing at his feet, clasping his knees with his clinging arms.

"John!—John! don't you know me? Oh, forgive me!—forgive me that I have dared do this—that I have ventured to be near you—the only man I ever loved! Can you forgive me, John, will you?"

The wig fell off, and Cecile's golden hair streamed over her shoulders, as he had seen it so often.

"Cecile!" He said the word, gaspingly, wonderfully with a great fear, a great doubt, a great fear, as the girl lay unconscious in his face.

"It is I—when I wash off the dye you will see—but, John!—John!—tell me you will forgive me—I am a widow, for five weary years—and I want you to say what you said a moment ago. I know I wrecked your life, but can I not make amends? John, may I?"

And, just as the midnight bells rung in the glad New Year, Cecile's new life began.

tention. On other occasions he was practicing at circus performances, gazing with deep wonder into shop windows, or otherwise disposing of his valuable time.

His companions were surprised at Pete's impetuous manner of breaking up their games, and dashing off at a tangent in the midst of an interesting situation. They were not aware that the appearance of Colonel Green in the street was the cause of these evolutions.

Despite his vigilance he lost sight of the object of his pursuit at times. It then became a matter of the first consequence to recover the trail.

Pete would then glide into a suspected saloon, with a broken-mouthed pitcher, and the innocent remarker,

"Say, Mr. Finn, old Johnny Logan, what lives up there, t'other side the blacksmith shop, sent me down for a pint of ale. He'll step round himself and square off the reckoning with you. So he says."

"Tell Johnnny Logan that we're doing a cash business now," the inn-keeper would reply. "And get out that door, sudden."

"An empty pitcher's easier to carry than a full one; that's logic," was Pete's rejoinder. "Think it wouldn't be hard to carry you, for you're the emptiest beat I ever did see."

Such remarks were usually followed by a hasty business call for Pete in the street.

His next demand might be in some business concern.

"Any work to-day for a poor boy, mister?"

"What sort of work are you used to?"

"Kin do most anything. Jist say what you want me fer, and you kin bet I'm good at that."

"We want you to-day for nothing."

"You've hit it there, mister. That's just what I've been looking up to. I tell you I'm a coon at doin' nothing."

And so he would keep it up, spreading his innocence indiscriminately, until fortune brought him again within view of Colonel Green.

The associates of the colonel were also objects of great interest to him. Not one of the more familiar of these but what Pete honored with a share of his special attention.

But among them he saw no one remaining him of the person with whom he had heard Colonel Green speak of Minnie Ellis.

One day he thought he had a glimpse of the colonel, passing the colonel in the street, with a seeming gesture of recognition. But, as before, he saw only his back, and soon lost sight of that.

All this was very discouraging to the boy. There was nothing to show that Colonel Green had any deeper interest at stake than the needs of eating and sleeping at his boarding-house, of

Got my left eye on you, kurnel. When I take aim with the left eye it never misses. Think I'll just take a quiet walk through the woods. Hope you ain't got no objections, kurnel. You and me can't never been interduced, or I might jine you."

The wood soon ended in an open, farming country. The colonel here took a narrow lane, which led him through a range of farms, and into another piece of woodland, some two miles forward.

Pete had plodded along in his rear, managing to avoid the suspicious glances which the colonel cast back, or to appear as a rustic farm-hand, without a thought above turnips.

Once in the woods again, concealment was easier.

On leaving this strip of woodland Colonel Green emerged upon the bank of the river, at a wild-looking place.

It was a small clearing, which had been abandoned, while a thick growth of bushes had replaced the felled trees, some of whose trunks were yet visible in the long grass.

The line of woods stretched around it and touched the river-bank beyond.

Near the river lay the deserted cabin of the settler, a two-story log hut. The upper story seemed to have been added more recently, and was built of roughly-planed boards.

Decay appeared to have seized upon the original log structure, and the whole affair had a rickety aspect.

Pete hung back in the shadow of a huge oak while the colonel walked rapidly across the intervening space and disappeared within the door of the hut.

The boy remained for some time in his hiding-place, not thinking it advisable to show himself too soon, and indulging in one of his customary soliloquies.

"Treed, Kurnel Green; if you ain't, Picayune Pete don't know beans. I'm fur you, hoss. You've got the gal in that shanty, and I'm jest the feller to bring her out of there, or blow up. Look out, kurnel, Pete's a-comin'. Keep your left eye skinned, my military friend, or you're sold."

The low bushes surrounding the hut fully protected Pete's advance. He crept forward with the utmost caution, avoiding any noise, and was some twenty minutes in reaching the hut.

He had approached it from the rear. The old, moss-grown and decayed logs rose upright before him, partly covered by climbing vines.

There was no opening in the lower story, but a small window appeared in the side of the upper story just above him.

After peering over the edge of the window, there was no one on the look-out, Pete returned to the rear.

The river ran here close by him, with a small sail-boat tied to the bank. The place seemed to have been used as a sort of fishing-station.

Without further hesitation, Pete grasped the vines and the projections of the logs, and began cautiously to ascend.

With his agility and practice in gymnastic sports it was child's play to him, and in a minute or two he had grasped the sill of the window, and swung himself up so that his eyes commanded a view of the interior.

A small room was visible before him, an open door leading into a passage beyond, while a second closed door seemed to lead to a second apartment.

While he looked, this door opened and the form of Colonel Green appeared. The boy ducked his head quickly down, but not too soon to catch a glimpse of another form in the room beyond.

"But I am going back to town, and it will be no trouble."

"You are sure it will be no trouble?" she asked.

"Not the least. Are you not fond of riding?"

"Oh, ever so fond! But I am afraid my aunt might not approve of my riding with a strange gentleman. I am sure madame would not."

"Madame! Who is madame?"

"Why, our teacher. At the Young Ladies' Select School, you know."

"Yes, yes; I know madame well. She would have no objection to my driving you home. I know your aunt also. Here is my carriage. Shall I help you in?"

They had now emerged up on the country lane that ran here by the side of the wood.

A partly-closed carriage, drawn by one horse, stood near them—the animal tied to a roadside tree.

It did not strike Minnie as strange that her new friend should have a carriage waiting for him in this out-of-the-way place. She was not aware that he had followed her on foot from the city.

She stood irresolute—half wishing for the offered ride, half dreading some blame for her imprudence.

He unled the horse, and led it to the middle of the road.

"Now, my dear, allow me," he said. Ere she hardly realized it, he had gently lifted her, and deposited her in the carriage.

In instant he was beside her, and had started the horse down the road.

She felt rather pleased to be thus forced, as it were, to do as her wishes commanded. She was in the walk home would have been a long one.

Minnie failed to see a figure that stood in the woods at a short distance, looking with sardonic pleasure at this incident. It was the figure of the person who had provided the carriage, and left it in this lonely situation.

"Are you not driving in the wrong direction?" she asked, laying her small hand upon his arm.

"No; the road winds below here. You will be home in twenty minutes."

"I am afraid aunty will be wondering what keeps me. It is past supper-time now."

"I am not vexed yet," he replied. "See, is not that beautiful?"

He pointed to where the sunlight struck upon a long reach of water before them, painting the ripples with a golden luster.

"Oh, charming!" she cried. "And see yonder! that vessel? How prettily it stands out. You can see every rope against the sky. Don't they have a wonderful number of masts, and ropes, and sails about a vessel?"

"About some vessels they certainly do."

"But see, you are surely going wrong. There is the city behind us."

"I am not going wrong, my child. You will soon see that."

They passed several houses built by the roadside, and entered upon a more lonely reach of road.

Soon the carriage drove past a piece of woodland that seemed to stretch to the water's edge.

"Now you are going wrong," she said, in a frightened tone. "You have taken the wrong road, sir, I am sure. Aunty will be so worried about it."

"I believe I am wrong; that's a fact," he said, doubtfully. "I will drive down this way. I think I see a house through the trees there, where I can inquire."

He turned the horse into a narrow track through the woods, the trees on each side early grazing the carriage, while a misty evening gloom lay beneath the leafy arches.

Minnie looked eagerly and anxiously forward for the house he had spoken of. Her clear vision could detect nothing of the kind.

"Hadn't you better turn back, sir?" asked the frightened child. "There is no house here, and it is growing ever so dismal."

"Yes, there it is now; I was sure I saw one."

They emerged into a small open space, with the river in the background, and a small log house in the center.

"Let me out you out now, my child. I think we can find our way here."

"I would rather stay here, if you please," she said, falteringly.

"No, no, you must be tired of the carriage."

He lifted her like a feather in his strong arms, and deposited her upon the ground.

Letting the horse stand, he grasped her hand and led her toward the hut.

Minnie held back, not yet quite sure whether she should distrust this new acquaintance. But, heedless of her hesitation, he drew her rapidly forward, and in a minute they had entered the hut.

They were in a sparsely-furnished room, in which midst sat and rocked an ill-favored old woman.

"Mrs. Jones," he said, drawing the child toward her, "I have brought you my niece, Susie Thompson, as I promised. I wish you to take the best of care of her."

Minnie drew her hand out of his grasp, and stood looking at him with wide, fearful eyes.

"Very glad to see her," said the old woman, in a rasping voice. "Guess she and me will get along nice together."

"What do you mean?" cried the child.

"Oh, sir, take me home. I must go home!"

"Yes, yes, and home is where Mrs. Jones and I will keep house together for the present."

Minnie looked from one to the other, half-supposed with surprise. Then she turned, with a quick movement, and darted to the door.

But her captor was too quick for her. He caught her before she could reach the door, and drew her forcibly back.

"What did I tell you, Mrs. Jones?" he said.

Minnie struggled violently to escape.

"Let me go!" she cried, in angry tones, "I must go home! I will go home! It was too bad of you, you wicked man, to bring me here."

"Now, Susie, dear niece, I am sorry to see you act as I did before Mrs. Jones."

"I am not Susie; and not your niece!" screamed the child, in hysterical anger. "I want to go home! I will go home!"

"You see how it is, Mrs. Jones," he said. "She needs correction."

"That is so, Mr. Thompson," spoke the cracked voice of the old woman. "Leave her with me. I will bring her to."

"I fear she will be too much for you. I will have to lock her in her own room until she learns to behave better."

He picked up the struggling child in his arms and carried her forcibly to the stairs.

"Oh, sir! don't, don't!" she begged, pitifully.

"I will do anything, if you will only let me go home. I am sorry, indeed I am, that I spoke to you so."

He made no answer, but bore her up on the stairs and to the door of a room in the second story. This he opened and would have placed her on a chair inside, but she clung to him, tears streaming from her eyes.

"Oh, don't leave me with that dreadful old woman! Oh, won't you take me home?"

He disengaged her hands, and hastened to the door. She heard the grating of a bolt behind him. He was gone.

Minnie threw herself on the floor in a paroxysm of grief and fear, sobbing and moaning as if her little heart would break.

The old woman brought her up some supper, set it on the table, and went away unnoticed by her.

It was a dreadful night which the child passed. She was naturally passionate, and broke into ecstasies of anger, beating against the door, and screaming at the top of her voice. These fits were succeeded by spells of weeping, and shuddering dread.

Finally exhausted nature found its antidote in sleep—a slumber visited by unpleasant dreams—a fitful, unrefreshing sleep.

The next day passed, and the next, and the next, and Minnie continued a close prisoner. Her fits of rage did not return—grief and dread alone possessed her.

Mrs. Jones visited her at meal-times, bringing her food. The old woman usually sought to enter into conversation with her, persistently calling

ing her by the name of Susie. In vain she declared that her name was Minnie Ellis, that she lived in Toledo, and begged piteously to be set free. Mrs. Jones was not to be moved by any such appeals.

Days—months, it seemed to her—of the people?

"Why does the maiden pluck the rose from the parent stem?" was his answer.

Maggie made no answer.

"It is because she loves the flower," the chief answered, "and that is why I have taken the white rose of the pale-faces."

"You were not with my captors last night," she answered.

"My warriors were" he answered. "Long has Hawk-Eyes loved the white maiden and wanted her for a wife. He has spared her life that she might brighten up his life with the light of her face."

"Then you may as well kill me here, for I will never be your wife," answered Maggie, indignantly.

"Let my white rose remember that her people are all dead, and that Hawk-Eyes is her best friend, now."

"Hawk-Eyes tells a falsehood!" reiterated the maiden, scornfully, "and I hate him for it. My friends are not all dead."

"Ugh! the white rose has thorns that are concealed," the chief answered, sarcastically, for her report cut sharply into his cowardly spirit; "but they are harmless," he added, mockingly.

"A brave chief would not mock a feeble helpless girl. He dare not face the friend I left on the island and speak thus to me."

"Hawk-Eyes fears not the dead," was the savage's reply, that fairly crushed the maiden's heart; but she bravely concealed her emotions from her tormentor. Upon reflection she took courage. She knew her captor's assertion was made without any positive knowledge as to whether Seth had been dead or not; for they had left before the savages had been decided between her friend and the savages.

The discharge of firearms, the shouts, yells, and strange cries that rent the night soon after their departure from the island, had died out, and a deep silence reigned. Pretty Maggie noticed that her captor betrayed uneasiness, yet he endeavored to conceal it, in every possible way, from her.

Suddenly a shout rang across the lake, that seemed to increase the chief's fears, and he at once embarked in the dugout, with his captive, for other quarters. Something in the sound he had heard convinced him that it was not safe to tarry longer; and what gave him uneasiness and fear, gave Maggie hope and courage.

He paddled his paddle with extreme caution, and darted from one island to another, pausing to rest and listen whenever under the shadow of an islet.

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**ELEVATING INFLUENCE.**

BY JOE JOT, JR.

To pass a lady on the street  
And bow politely to her,  
Then find that you're mistaken, sore,  
And that you never knew her.  
  
To see a dun come down the walk,  
And dodge across the street,  
So you will not disturb his mind—  
And then another meet.  
  
To stand yourself when out to dine  
Like other men of taste,  
And then at the ladies drink  
Your tea down the wrong throat.  
  
To talk against an absent man  
In language that doth sore,  
And then be tenderly informed  
A relative is near.  
  
To sit down in a railroad car  
By a young lady's side,  
And the first thing she says to you  
Is that it's occupied.  
  
Or to an aged woman yield  
Half of the seat, and find  
A younger and a prettier one  
Lest standing up behind.  
  
To tell your partner at the dance  
That you cannot discern  
A girl in all the throng,  
And fall execrably "her'n".  
  
To think you're going down the street  
Cutting a figure quite,  
When your coat-collar's sticking up,  
And back's all over white.  
  
To try to leave the room at dark—  
And, worst of human woes,  
Feel all about you for the door,  
And find it with your nose.  
  
To hollao at the man before  
Whom you a friend believe,  
And find out when he turns around  
That appearance deceives.  
  
To follow up a scandalous tale  
That's going round on you,  
And when at last you run it down,  
Find out that it is true!

**Great Captains.**
**BLUCHER,  
MARSHAL FORWARD.**

BY DR. LOUIS LEGRAND

To class Blucher with great captains is to accord him too much eminence, since, in planning campaigns or acting independently, he was not comparable even with most of Napoleon's or the Czar Alexander's marshals. He was, however, an illustrious soldier, whose name and fame were not only dear to Prussians but became of world-wide celebrity. He was simply a *hard fighter*—a man not only insensible to personal danger but of a tenacity of will that won for him, among his soldiers, the sobriquet of Bulldog of the Rhine, while his readiness to go into fight, and his precipitancy in march, gave him, later, and less to the satisfaction of title of "Marshal Forward." To Napoleon, however, he was "The Old Devil"—*le vieux diable*, and to the world he now appears as one of the most prominent personages of an era that almost swarmed with celebrated military characters.

Lebrecht Von Blucher was born Dec. 18th, 1747, at Rostock, a town lying near the shores of the Baltic, in Mecklenburg. He came of honorable family—of Grossen Rensow. His father was captain of cavalry in the forces of Hesse-Cassel. He thus came naturally to think of the army as a profession, but turned soldier much too soon for his father's plans for his son's education. He sent the lad to the island of Rügen for private tuition but there the sight of some Swedish girls was too much for his duty as a tutor—teachers, for despite their remonstrances, he enlisted in the Swedish service as cornet, in a regiment of hussars, being but fourteen years of age.

Sweden was then in the alliance with Russia and Austria against Frederick II. of Prussia, and the "Seven Years' War" was just opening. The boy, thus in arms against his own sovereign, was taken prisoner in his very first adventure in Pomerania, by the regiment of which he afterward became the distinguished leader—the Black Hussars. Its colonel, Von Bellung, pleased him to enlist in his regiment, giving in exchange a Swiss uniform.

Lebrecht advanced rapidly. The Black Hussars grew to be one of Frederick's most efficient corps, and fought with such splendid valor as to win laurels on every field. His thinned ranks were filled up with chosen men and its officers were promoted from the ranks for distinguished merit. Young Blucher's undaunted courage and devotion to duty had a reward in his advancement in three years to the senior captaincy. Then occurred a vacancy by the major's death. Promotion in order indicated young Blucher for the vacancy, but birth now set aside merit; a young nobleman took the place. Blucher remonstrated, and the walls resounded with his voice, but this did not effect the removal of the titled officer; so the young captain sent in a request to the king to be permitted to resign, and received this characteristic answer:

"Captain Blucher has permission to quit my service, and he may go to the devil if he thinks fit."

He didn't "go to the devil," however, but retired to the duchy of Silesia, and, with a kind of fierce zeal, devoted the succeeding fifteen years of his life to tilling the soil and acquiring an estate. In this he was eminently successful.

The war went on. Frederick, alone, and with masses of generalists, who failed with the three powers, and the world willingly conceded him the title of The Great. Prussia, devastated by armies, and almost shorn of its young men by the sacrifice of the war, began to recover her prosperity, and the captain-farmer seemed lost from sight forever in the plodding pursuit of planting and reaping, when Frederick the Great (1760) was to be succeeded by Frederick William II., his nephew.

This gay prince, who had known and admired Blucher, at once called him from his acres to make him major of the Black Hussars; but, until Frederick, in 1792, proposed and effected the coalition against France, did the regiment receive its services. Then followed the invasion of the French and the battles of Orchies, Ligny, Charleroi, Frankenthal, Oppenheim, Kirchweiler, and Eibisheim. In each of these he participated, and rose, by force of his "genius for fight," to a brigade command. At the fierce battle at Leystadt, (Sept. 15th, 1794,) he won new laurels as major-general of the army of observation in the lower Rhine, after peace with France, (1795). Prussia, thereafter, kept clear of the "alliance" against France, until 1805, when Frederick William III. was forced by Russia to join in a new coalition against Napoleon, whose tempestuous strides of power and conquest made him the standing menace to the other powers. This coalition resulted in a series of victories upon Prussia the utmost strength of the French emperor. The splendid corps of Soub, Murat, and Bernadotte, led by Napoleon in person, with dauntless command of the right wing, invaded Prussia, by way of Saxony, and Davout struck Blucher's corps at Auerstadt, Oct. 14, 1806, while Napoleon, with the main body, fought the bloody battle of Jena, and by a signal victory, opened the way to Berlin, which city he proceeded to occupy and retain until 1809. Blucher, cut off from the main army under Prince Hohenlohe, which Napoleon had defeated at Jena, tried to make a junction with it, and thence to retreat northward into Pomerania. But the force was closely pursued, and, penned up in Friedland, had to surrender. This compelled Blucher to "cut and run" for Mecklenburg, where a new battle-front behind the river Trave was presented. Blucher threw his corps into Lubeck,

that place the French assailed with overwhelming force. Blucher was overcome and escaped, with a remnant of his troops, but was headed off and surrendered at Ratkau, (Nov. 6th, 1806), when he was inserted in the article of capitulation the following: "The capitulation was offered to him by the Prince of Ponto-corvo, and he accepted it only from want of ammunition, provisions and forces."

Napoleon treated the sturdy cavalryman with studied politeness. The motive uppermost in that consummate tactician's mind was to alienate the Prussian leaders and enlist them against Russia—an object only too successful with many less heroic souls than that of Blucher. He was steadfast as iron, and being soon exchanged for General Victor, he started for Strasburg, to aid the Swedes in holding that city.

The peace of Tilsit, (July 1st, 1807,) so humiliating to Frederick William III., left Prussia at peace—under a French occupancy of Berlin, but Blucher was so intrusted with the Czar's instigation that he was dismissed from the service that night deep chagrined to patriotic German; and, in company with several other distinguished officers, he retired wholly from any participation in affairs, and for several years was heard of no more. In the campaign against Russia, of 1812, when Prussia and Austria sustained France, he took no part. In 1813, after Napoleon's awful disaster in Russia, and the retreat from Moscow witnessed the first serious blow of his supremacy over Europe, the Prussians arose almost *en masse* against their conqueror, whose yoke they had worn for nearly six years. Blucher was called from his retirement. Though then but a man of age, he still was a full-blooded and bold Aspinwall, commanding in chief of the Prussian army, with a corps of Russians, under Winzingerode, he took the field against the French, still exceedingly powerful and confident. The battle of Lutzen (May 24, 1813,) was the first of the rapid series to follow. Napoleon commanded in person, having brought in an entirely new army of 350,000 men, resolved to retain his German possessions, to regain his protectorate over Prussia and to force the Czar Alexander to a peace honorable to France—thus leaving the French emperor master of Europe. Blucher was beaten back, but as usual with him, he retreated, saving men and guns, and was in flight to Dresden the next day. His heart was conspicuous that day, having been pinned on him the Order of St. George. In the battle of Bautzen (May 21st) Blucher was again beaten back—not defeated; his army was intact, cheerful and steadily growing in strength by reinforcements—Napoleon's German allies coming over to the Prussians in great numbers.

Austria, neutral in this contest, now proposed an armistice. This was accepted to, but all efforts to induce Napoleon to accept the Rhine as the boundary of France failed; so, the armistice having expired (Aug. 10th), Austria joined the coalition against Napoleon and a series of terrible conflicts commenced, at last at Dresden, (Aug. 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th) in which the French had the advantage. But disasters only added new resources to the allies, and Napoleon, by several heavy losses, was finally given a crushing blow by Blucher on the Katzbach, which threw the French backward—the beginning of their retreat from Prussia and Germany.

At Leipzig Napoleon resolved upon a desperate stand. Oct. 16th and 18th two prolonged and sanguinary conflicts took place, in which Blucher was especially distinguished. The vanquished French now retreated toward the Rhine—leaving twenty-five thousand French in Leipzig, prisoners to the allies. That retreat was a second Moscow. The French, under the emperor marching the Rhine with only about thirty-five thousand men—all that remained of his new army of three hundred and fifty thousand.

Passing this remnant over the river, Napoleon again hastened to Paris to recruit another army. But the allies were prompt to press their advantage. Blucher as "Marshal Forward," with two Russian, two Prussian, one Hessian and one mixed corps, crossed the Rhine Jan. 1st, 1804, to march on Paris. After some severe reverses dealt by the now desperate emperor with a skill that has no parallel in modern warfare—the old Prussian was before the French capital the last of March. On the 30th the allied army made its grand assault on the fortifications of Paris, and the Czar Alexander, the king of Prussia, and Old Blucher rode into Paris, at the head of their army. Napoleon abdicated April 4th, and on May 4th landed in Elba—his island home which the allied powers had assigned as his sole realm. The czar, the king of Prussia and Blucher passed over to London, in June—where the old hero created immense enthusiasm among all classes of people.

Blucher, now covered with honors, and made Prince of Walstade by his grateful sovereign, retired to his Silesian farm, only to be called to the field again when Napoleon burst his bonds and suddenly reappeared in France, in March, 1815, to restore the reins of government and defend his enemies. The allies moved quickly in arms. Blucher was given chief command of the Prussian and German corps, about eighty thousand men, and started, in June, to join Wellington in the Netherlands. Napoleon, with two corps, struck him at Ligny, June 16th, and administered, as he supposed, a severe defeat. Old Blucher was reported as killed, at which Napoleon very naturally expressed great satisfaction, as he turned to fall upon Wellington, at Waterloo, leaving Grouchy, with thirty thousand men, to "attend to the Prussians." Fatal mistake! Old Blucher had fallen down on the field of battle, lying under his dead horse, while six regiments of cuirassiers rode over the field, where he lay. After they were gone he got up, rejoined his corps, which had simply been pressed back, left one division to "attend to Grouchy," and started after Napoleon in hot haste. How he came up at the critical moment, on the evening of the eventful day of Waterloo (June 18th), we have related in our sketch of Wellington. He administered the finishing blow, and a dreadful blow it was.

Sixteen regiments of hussars pursued all that moonlit night, and their path was literally lined with the French dead. The silver mask was occupied by others beside himself. He saw two figures leaning over the railing. The moonlight fell upon their bodies, and the witness started when he saw that one was the lost mask.

Tinnette's companion was clad in the garb of an Italian bandit, and looked one with his costly plumes and glittering sash. Tall and manly he looked as he suddenly assumed an erect position, and Guillaume noted his massive chest and strong limbs.

"I wouldn't give a fig for such love as yours!" the brigand said to his companion. "You are like April—You know with whom I say you're right."

The Silver Mask did not reply.

"It is enough, Tinnette!" the man continued.

"Did I not say long ago that you should never turn from me and live to make me the fool of Florence?"

"But, signor—"

"Signor! It was not signor before he crossed your path!" the man said, bitterly. "I want no fawning now. To-night you would cry for forgiveness on my shoulder; to-morrow talk love with him in the public market."

His last words made the listener start, and his hand crept to the hilt of the sword concealed beneath his harper's cloak.

The mask was looking away—far over the river, as it seemed while the bandit's fierce eyes showered baleful light upon her.

"No!" he suddenly cried, grasping the mask's shoulder and tearing her from the railing.

"There is a place where foolish girls cannot fit noblemen. You have made love in the market for the last time! Now down to the river, whose silver waves roll over hates and loves alike!"

With almost supernatural strength the Silver Mask was jerked into the air, and the maddened man sprang to the edge of the balcony.

One moment he stood there, with the girl poised above his plumes, then a wild cry full of terror started him, and he turned like a lion at bay upon the sword that flashed in his presence.

But his hands were empty. The dark object descending like a spent rocket toward the river was the Silver Mask!

He uttered a cry of joy when he noted the harper, who stood erect in his presence with sword unsheathed and epithets on his maddened lips.

"Draw, villain!" cried Guillaume. "For that dastardly crime you shall forfeit your worthless life."

Sword struck sword in the light of the silver moon, and the conflict that followed was brief and terrible. For Guillaume's steel, impetuous and invincible, tore the other from its owner's grasp, and the cap of plumes fell over

not afford to ogle flower girls in the public markets."

The fellow addressed as Guillaume did not reply, but darted the girl a singular look, as he permitted his comrade to draw him from the stall.

"Their faces are alike, boy," the petulant Florentine said.

"But she was so lovely."

"I can find lovelier girls in the fish markets."

"Nonsense! she looked like the flowers which she was selling."

Signor Tinto bit his lip, and cast a furtive glance over his shoulder at the girl, whose eye was following them.

He was too far away to note the pallor that chased the ruddy hue from her cheeks.

Half an hour later Guillaume stood before the girl again. Her stock of flowers had dwindled to a few bunches, which had been picked over.

Florentine was the last of the stallholders. The Italian made several purchases that delighted the girl, and drew her into conversation.

He discovered that her name was Tinnette, and that she lived in a poor quarter of the city, where she supported her aged mother by her daily sale of flowers.

Her youthful beauty was striking enough to captivate such a man as Guillaume Raphia, and he did not desert the stall until he had purchased the last flower, and showered sequins into Tinnette's purse.

As he walked away, reluctantly, he did not dream of the tragic manner in which his new acquaintance would be destined to end.

He sought his luxuriant belongings in the most fashionable quarter of the beautiful Italian city, and prepared for the masque which was to be given that night in honor of the carnival. He threw the flowers upon the dressing-stand, and cast a smile upon them. Somehow or other the image of little Tinnette clung to his thoughts, and he saw her while he robed himself in the costume of an ancient harper.

"It will do me no good to think of her," he suddenly exclaimed. "There are hundreds of such girls in Florence. I must dismiss you, fair Tinnette. No doubt you possess a lover whose name is as familiar to you as your own. But, I could love your girl, though I am far above you in station. You dare not! Guillaume Raphia possesses the family pride. He can not be the laughing-stock of Florence."

The torchlight that flashed from the Florentine's steps, bore to the masquerade the *soi disant* harper, who was stared at by the many masks already assembled as he entered, seeming by bent double with age.

It was a grand gathering. The wealth, beauty and love-mates of the gay capital were there, each face masked and well hidden. The vast rooms were filled with the noisy, chattering throng, while some had sought the balcony that overlooked the water, sleeping like a child in the mellow moonlight. The light was out of Italy's banqueting, and the strains of music that floated aloft to die among the stars, as it were, seemed to come from hark's inspiration.

"There it goes again—the silver mask!" said Guillaume Raphia, as a boyish form brushed the folds of his harper's hood. The face was concealed by a silvery mask, that glittered in the lamplight like a piece of costly silk.

The harper gazed after the mask until it was lost amid the throng that swayed from wall to wall with laughter and voluptuous song.

He followed with a gait altogether too nimble for an aged musician, and found himself in the largest one of the carnival halls. Casting his eyes about, he espied the object of his errand and silently approached.

The Silver Mask did not court the company that Guillaume extended, but ventured to withdraw. But the eager Florentine restrained the figure and looked into the deep eyes that peeped from the sheet.

"One request, fair mask," he said, half pleadingly. "Let me stand beside you when we uncover."

"No, signor," was the reply, spoken in evident fright.

Guillaume started, and quickly drew the slender form to him, while his lips touched the mask's ear.

"I know you, Tinnette! I bought your flower to-day; but do not fear. I will not betray you."

The next moment the Silver Mask had torn itself from the harper's embrace and was lost to sight.

"What! that beautiful young girl here!" he exclaimed, almost bewildered by his discovery.

"I wonder what nobleman is her protector? This night I will find out. It is near midnight; then we unmask—then I will know who her lover is."

The moment passed wearily to the interested Italiots. The carnival had lost its charm, and the harp no longer delighted the revelers with its sweet music. From room to room he sought the Silver Mask, and finding it not, was about to conclude that his discovery had frightened it from the palace, when some unaccountable something drew him to the balcony.

As it was near the midnight hour, the moon sinking toward the water threw its light upon half of the structure. Guillaume found himself in the shadow as he stepped without noise upon the porch.

No sound arrested his attention, until he heard low voices, and suddenly discovered that the balcony was occupied by others beside himself. He saw two figures leaning over the railing.

The moonlight fell upon their bodies, and the witness started when he saw that one was the lost mask.

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